

## Duxbury Clipper

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### Fire Chief to Retire

By SUSANNA SHEEHAN

After 33 years of fighting fires in Duxbury, Fire Chief William Harriman announced this week that he'll be retiring next spring.

Harriman, 60, told selectmen Monday night that he gave his resignation letter to Town Manager Rocco Longo last week. His official date will be August 10, 2004, but he will be taking his unused vacation time, so his last day on the job will be May 15.

"This was a very difficult decision," said Harriman, who lives on Summer St. "I've agonized over it. This



Fire Chief Bill Harriman

town has been very good to me. I don't have to go to work for a living. I just do what I love to do every day."

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Harriman said later that there was no specific reason he was retiring, just that he felt it was time.

"There's not any one thing in particular. I still love getting up in the morning and going to work," Harriman said. "A lot of things just came together to help me make the decision. There's a lot of stress on the job and that stress wears on you."

He said that after September 11, 2001, his job became even more stressful. Also, he recently turned 60 and decided he wants to spend more quality time with his family, namely his three grandchildren in Richmond, Va.

Harriman stressed that his health is not a factor in his decision to retire. He had prostate cancer three years ago, but he recently received a complete physical and was assured that he is in great shape and that the PSA test for cancer shows the lowest possible level.

"There's no health implication at all," said Harriman.

Selectmen greeted the news of Harriman's retirement with sadness, and with praise and assurances that he will be missed.

"I have never met anyone who gave more to his job and to his town than he did," said Betsy Sullivan, selectmen chairman. "We'll never replace you, but we'll work hard to respect the traditions you've created. The town of Duxbury is behind you one hundred percent."

"I guess after 33 years with the department, you've earned it," said Selectman

Andre Martecchini. "But I will miss you."

Harriman was appointed as fire chief in October 1996 after serving as deputy chief for 13 years. His career in firefighting started 43 years ago as a volunteer firefighter in Carver. He began with the Duxbury department as a fire fighter in 1971 and rose through the ranks to reach deputy chief in 1983.

Harriman served as a Sergeant/fire protection specialist in the army from 1967-1970 and was honorably discharged. He also worked for the Bureau of Forest Fire at that state Department of Natural Resources before he joined the Duxbury force.

When he became Duxbury's chief, Harriman called his appointment is a fulfillment of a life long goal.

During his tenure, Harriman fought for many years to reopen the Ashdod station in West Duxbury. His dream of better fire protection for this part of town finally came true in May 2000 when the renovated station opened its doors.

Harriman also worked diligently to convince the town that it needed a new ladder truck as the old one dated to 1975; in 2002 town meeting voted to bond a new aerial ladder truck for \$625,000. The shiny, red truck was recently delivered and will go into service on October 1.

Another accomplishment Harriman will see to fruition before he retires is a town-wide alarm system. Money was voted for this system years ago, but there have been delays in its implementation.